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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff

SUBJECT : Request for Information on Soviet and Chinese Communist Participation as Military Advisors to North Vietnam

1. In response to your requirement, we have checked our files and found that Soviet and Chinese Communist military advisors in North Vietnam (Democratic Republic of Vietnam - DRV) are believed to work under the aegis of the Political Directorate (TONG CUC CHINH TRI) of the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN). These advisors operate in semi-secrecy to avoid all unnecessary contact with army personnel as well as with the general public. No mention is ever made of their existence or activities either in the press or over the radio.

2. The same security measures appear to have been extended to both the Soviet and Chinese Communist advisory missions. This arrangement probably stems from the natural secretiveness of the Communists and the desire not to give an appearance of external domination or direction of the DRV which might provide ammunition for anti-Communist propaganda efforts. The system is probably also designed to hide the existence of the missions from the North Vietnamese themselves, whose sensitive nationalist feelings might otherwise be offended. In the case of the Chinese Communists, this secretiveness is facilitated by other factors. The Chinese Communists are said frequently to use Vietnamese names, which, together with the use of PAVN uniforms and a similarity of facial features, enables them further to avoid notice.

3. According to a recent report, it is doubtful that PAVN now has any Soviet military advisors. The presence of Chinese Communist military technicians with major PAVN units is reported periodically, but it has never been possible, for reasons stated above, to obtain precise details on the numbers and assignments of these advisors. According to one report, most Chinese Communist military technicians are assigned to specialized PAVN units including armor, engineers, artillery, antiaircraft and, possibly but not probably, aviation. A second report claims that, as of early August 1957, there were no Chinese Communist (or Soviet) advisors in PAVN at division level, although it commented that there might be high-ranking advisors to the Ministry of Defense.

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4. While the presence of relatively large numbers of Soviet and Chinese Communist personnel in the DRV has been established, these appear to be chiefly economic and other non-military technicians. The number of military advisory personnel, although not known specifically, is probably not very large, for Soviet and especially Chinese Communist military guidance to the DRV, judging from numerous reports, is provided in large measure by the training of PAVN contingents in China rather than in the DRV. It is also possible that staff guidance and advice may be provided by the Chinese Communists to PAVN through organizations established in China. [redacted] 25X1X7

[redacted] 25X1X7

25X1X7 [redacted] 25X1X7

[redacted] 25X1X7

5. Another source of advice to PAVN may be the Soviet and Chinese Communist military attaches stationed in Hanoi. The Soviet personnel include Maj. Gen. P. I. Ryzyashin, military attache, and three assistant military attaches: F. V. Konstantinov, N. I. Khrenyov, and Lt. Col. Fridibailo. The only Chinese Communist who has been identified as a military attache is Kuang Jung-chieh (0717/2837/0267).

6. If you feel it necessary to levy further requirements on the Clandestine Services, we will attempt to meet them. We are attaching a summary of pertinent CS reports.

ALLEN W. DULLES
Director of Central Intelligence

Attachment:
As stated above

23 January 1958
Distribution:
0 & 1 - addressee
1 - DCI
1 - Executive Registry
1 - [redacted]
1 - [redacted] 25X1X8
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